

REMARKS

In the last Office Action, claims 14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashizawa ('846), Tawagi or Japan ('359) in view of Okazaki ('899), Narisawa or Izukawa. Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and, insofar as understood, was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by Kuwabara or Kawata. Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Ashizawa.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11, 12, 15, 18-27, 29-36, 38, 39 and 41-43 were allowed.

In accordance with this amendment, applicants have elected to accept the allowed claims in order to expedite issuance of their patent. To this end, finally rejected claims 14, 16, 17 and 37 have been canceled, thereby leaving only allowed claims pending in the application.

The present amendment does, on its face, place the application in condition for allowance. The amendment cancels all rejected claims, leaving only allowed claims 1-3, 6-9, 11, 12, 15, 18-27, 29-36, 38, 39 and 41-43 pending in the application. Therefore entry of this amendment is deemed warranted under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and entry of this amendment together with passage of the application to issue are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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MAILING CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS AF, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date indicated below.

Debra Buonincontri

Name



Signature

August 5, 2003

Date

ADDITIONAL FEES:

No additional fees are believed required; however, should it be determined that a fee is due, authorization is hereby given to charge any such fee to our Deposit Account No. 01-0268.